

MONTHLY AWARD WINNERS

Crew Chief Safety

Award of Distinction

An expeditor dispatched a four-person engine run crew to an F-15E to perform a main fuel pump leak and operational check following a pump reduction gearbox seal replacement. SSgt Filbert reviewed the aircraft maintenance records, conducted a safety brief with his three-person ground crew, and prepared the aircraft for dual engine operation. He engaged the jet fuel starter (JFS) and started the right engine without incident. However, during the start sequence of the left engine, it immediately

accelerated to full afterburner causing the aircraft to roll up on the chocks. Responding precisely as trained, SSgt Filbert stood on the aircraft brakes and initiated emergency procedures. He chopped the left throttle to the off position, actuated the left engine fire button, and turned the left engine master switch off. He then cycled the JFS switch, cycled the left engine master switch, and restarted the JFS to motor the left engine, thereby ensuring a safe fan turbine inlet temperature per the emergency procedures. He then informed the tower of his ground emergency and shut down both engines. Upon shutdown, a small left engine tailpipe fire started which was quickly extinguished. SSgt Filbert's outstanding instantaneous response to this serious emergency prevented damage to the \$1.3 million engine and quite possibly fire damage to a \$44 million F-15E aircraft.

**SSgt John C. Filbert, 4th Aircraft Maintenance Sqdn.,
4th Fighter Wing, Seymour Johnson AFB, North Carolina**

Weapons Safety

Award of Distinction

SSgts Cisneros and Foster were working as the 2 MUNS "Red Ball" flight line maintenance team for a Nuclear Operational Readiness Exercise (NORE) BUSY MUDBUG 03-07. Their tasking was to ensure weapons safety and serviceability during aircraft loading, downloading, and transport to and from the flight line. They had just properly positioned their vehicle on the main aircraft generation ramp to observe preparations for a weapons movement consisting of 10 vehicles, four Air Launched Cruise Missile (ALCM) pylon packages, and two ALCM launcher packages back to the Weapons Storage Area (WSA). They observed a B-52H on the ramp outside of the generation area with its engines running. Both assumed an engine ground run was in

progress. Minutes later, they noticed the aircraft depart chocks west onto the apron, turn south, and proceed towards Taxiway Bravo on the established weapons movement route to depart the airfield on Runway 33. The weapons movement team received authorization to proceed to the WSA via Taxiway Bravo at approximately 1140 local time, just as the aircraft departed chocks. Maintenance Operations Control Center (MOCC) announced on all radio frequencies that a weapons movement had begun and all vehicles, including aircraft, were to hold their current positions and not enter into the purged movement route. SSgts Cisneros and Foster immediately contacted their MUNS flight line expeditors (AMMO 5) and notified them of the potentially hazardous situation. AMMO 5 contacted Munitions Control and MOCC, who were both unaware of any aircraft movement within the purged area. The aircraft continued onto Taxiway Bravo before being directed to hold short and clear of the weapons movement route. The movement continued around the aircraft and on to the WSA unabated. SSgts Cisneros and Foster's vigilance averted a serious situation and potentially an aircraft munitions mistake.

**SSgt Jodi L. Cisneros, SSgt Jeremy C. Foster, 2nd Munitions Sqdn.,
2nd Bomb Wing, Barksdale AFB, Louisiana**

Pilot Safety

Award of Distinction

Upon returning from an Operation NOBLE EAGLE sortie, Capt Lance Wilkins maneuvered his F-15C aircraft into position for a 7-mile final approach and was configuring his aircraft for landing under the cover of darkness. After lowering the landing gear handle, Capt Wilkins observed the light in the gear handle was still illuminated, the gear warning horn was sounding, and all three landing gear indicated unsafe. Capt Wilkins contacted the Mountain Home AFB Tower and requested a low approach and visual check of his landing gear. Tower informed him that it appeared that the nose landing gear was down but because of darkness and the three

external fuel tanks on his aircraft they could not confirm the status of the main landing gear. Capt Wilkins then contacted the operations desk for assistance and began to perform the emergency procedures checklist. After completion of the emergency gear extension checklist, Capt Wilkins still had three unsafe gear indications. In a final effort, the Operations Officer used night vision goggles in an attempt to confirm the status of the landing gear. On a low approach, the Operations Officer confirmed that all the gear appeared to be down. With all checklists completed, low on fuel and an unknown gear condition, Capt Wilkins guided his aircraft, loaded with four live missiles, 940 rounds of 20mm ammunition, and a full load of flares through the night skies and into a flawless approach and barrier engagement. Because of Capt Wilkins' exceptional poise, outstanding situational awareness, systems knowledge, and notable CRM skills, he evaded a potentially dangerous situation and preserved an Air Force asset.

**Capt Lance Wilkins, 390th Fighter Sqdn.,
366th Fighter Wing, Mountain Home AFB, Idaho**

Flightline Safety

Award of Distinction

A1C Bullock, A1C McKinney, SSgt Kennedy, and TSgt Regan were assigned to an F-16 aircraft tasked to complete an operations checks for an augmentor fuel filter leak check which required a high powered engine run on the trim pad. During the initial start up and 5-minute wait at idle prior to advancing the throttle to higher settings, there were no indications of a leak detected. The next part of the leak check required the aircraft throttle to be advanced to the intermediate position. At this setting there were also no leaks detected. The aircraft throttle was advanced to the mid-augmentor position. At this point the aircraft was in afterburner. The augmentor fuel filter had a few drops of fuel starting to show. At this time A1C McKinney and TSgt Regan began to inspect the area to pinpoint

the exact location of the leak on the filter. It was during this time that the filter ruptured sending 20 to 30 gallons of JP-8 throughout the engine bay area and all over the ground while the aircraft was in burner. A1C McKinney and TSgt Regan recognized the immediate potential for a major mishap and took action. Within seconds, A1C McKinney alerted SSgt Kennedy, who was in the aircraft, of the danger of the fuel leak. SSgt Kennedy accomplished his emergency shutdown procedures and evacuated the aircraft. A1C Bullock who was fire guard for the engine run recognized the danger immediately and had the fire bottle in position and ready to extinguish the area if needed. TSgt Regan recognized there was still a potential for possible light off of the fuel that had flooded the engine bay and hot exhaust area and quickly notified MOCC of the incident and declared a ground emergency. All four personnel remained with the aircraft until relieved by the fire department. The action of these four individuals reflects greatly on their alertness and training and averted the potential loss of an aircraft.

**A1C Michael Bullock, A1C Jacob E. McKinney, SSgt James M. Kennedy,
TSgt Michael J. Regan, 20th Aircraft Maintenance Sqdn.,
20th Fighter Wing, Shaw AFB, South Carolina**

